

REMARKS

Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendment and the following remarks.

Claims 1-12 were pending in this application. Claim 6 has been cancelled, and claims 1, 7 and 11 have been amended hereby to even more precisely recite features of the present invention. Support for the amendment to each of the claims can be found, for example, at paragraphs [0032] and [0037] of the present application. Claims 1-5 and 7-12 will be pending upon entry of this amendment. For the reasons stated below, Applicants respectfully submit that all claims pending in this application are in condition for allowance.

In the Office Action, claims 1, 3-7, 9 and 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by McIntosh (U.S. Publication No. 2003/0171119 A1); and claims 2, 8, 11 and 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over McIntosh in view of Lam (U.S. 6,782,276). These grounds of rejection are respectfully traversed.

Independent claims 1, 7 and 11 have been amended to even more clearly recite features of the present invention. Amended claim 1, for example, recites a method for routing a message from a first mobile station to a second mobile station that includes receiving a routing request from a third party (e.g., an originating carrier) for routing a message (e.g., and SMS message) from the first mobile station to the second mobile station. The routing request is received by an intermediary that operates neither a physical home location register (HLR) nor a physical mobile switching center (MSC). The intermediary thereafter determines to which carrier the second mobile station subscribes, and then dynamically creates an artificial International Mobile Subscriber Identity (IMSI) value based, at least in part, on the carrier to which the second mobile

station subscribes. The intermediary then returns a routing response to the third party for routing the message from the first mobile station to the second mobile station. The routing response includes the artificial IMSI value, such that the intermediary is considered, from the point of view of the third party, a mobile switching center. In accordance with the principles of the present invention the steps of receiving and returning employ SS7.

Independent claims 7 and 11 recite similar subject matter.

In other words, the intermediary of the present invention functions, from the perspective of the outside world, as a “real” mobile switching center (MSC), but is not, in fact, a true MSC-operating entity. The artificial IMSI value that is generated as part of the instant invention permits the intermediary to operate seamlessly within the SS7 network, yet not actually be a conventional MSC-operating entity.

McIntosh discloses a method for operating a virtual HLR. However, McIntosh also specifically discloses that the virtual HLR (HLR management routing function 128) is connected to the public MSC 114 via an IP network 130. The collection of HLRs in McIntosh is never accessed via the SS7 network.

More importantly, however, McIntosh fails to disclose or to suggest anything akin to the dynamically created “artificial IMSI value,” as now expressly recited in the claims, and which is a central feature in allowing the intermediary to exchange messages (requests and responses) with third parties to support message (e.g., SMS message) routing. Lam fails to overcome the deficiencies of McIntosh.

In view of the above, the §102 rejection based on McIntosh alone, and the §103 rejection based on a combination of McIntosh and Lam et al. should be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Serial No.: 10/724,106
Art Unit: 2682


Attorney's Docket No.: INP0006-US (540532-0321111)
Page 8

In view of the foregoing all of the claims in this case are believed to be in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner have any questions or determine that any further action is desirable to place this application in even better condition for issue, the Examiner is encouraged to telephone applicants' undersigned representative at the number listed below.

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